

Roger W. Kaufold
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Remarks

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1, 3-15, 17-38, and 40-43 will remain pending in this application. Claims 2, 16 and 39 have been cancelled. Independent claims 1, 22, and 27 have been amended to further recite the preferred coating maximum thickness to be applied to vehicle wheels according to this invention, namely "about 0.006 inch or less". As such, it is respectfully submitted that all remaining independent claims do not overlap with the thickness level recited, albeit for brake coatings, in the commonly owned, Patrick et al U.S. Patent No. 5,884,388 (hereafter "Patrick"). As there are numerous references throughout Applicants' specification to the foregoing, preferred maximum thickness, including the thickness ranges in Applicant paragraphs [0039], [0040] and [0041], it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is presented by way of the foregoing claim amendments

Summary of Rejections and Objections

Claims 1-3, 10, 15, 17-20, 27-28, 35, and 40-43 were rejected for obviousness over Patrick in view of Fogal et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,226,971 (hereafter "Fogal"). Claims 4-9, 12-14, 16, 21-26, 29-34, 37-39, and 44 were rejected for obviousness over Patrick in view of Fogal, and further in view of allegedly admitted prior art.

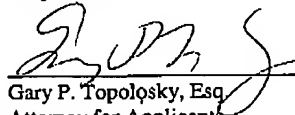
In this first Office Action, the Examiner contends that Patrick taught coating a vehicle component with a protective, wear resistant material, while Fogal taught coating in a machine that refurbishes used wheels to increase wear and service life. Yet neither reference, nor any lawful combination of same, will arrive at Applicants' vehicle wheel having the now more clearly recited, MAXIMUM thickness wear-resistant coating about its tire bead seat area. Patrick concentrated on aluminum brake rotors and not vehicle wheels *per se*. And in contrast to Applicants' *focus* of preferably coating just the tire bead retaining flange portion of their vehicle

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wheels, Fogal's machine refurbishes used wheels by passing them through an assembly line-type system of which only one step includes spraying preferably 1-3 mm thick (col. 7, lines 58-60) of a synthetic polymer or copolymer resin "C" onto much more than just the tire bead seat area of their wheels.

The combination of both Patrick and Fogal clearly fails to recite each and every element of Applicants' amended independent claims 1 and 27. It is respectfully submitted that adding otherwise "admitted prior art" to that mix would not render amended independent claim 22 invalid for obviousness either! The same would apply to all remaining claims either directly or indirectly dependent from above amended claims 1, 22 and 27. As such, Applicants and the undersigned respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all prior art rejections of their remaining claims thereby placing this case in condition for allowance. In the event that any outstanding matters remain with this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 724-337-2772 to discuss such matters.

Respectfully submitted,



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